

Kiel Farmstead
East Side, Illinois Route 4
One-half Mile South of U. S. 64
Vicinity of Shiloh Valley
St. Clair County
Illinois

HABS No. IL-1186

HABS
ILL
82-SHYA.V,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HABS
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

KIEL FARMSTEAD

HABS NO. IL-1186

Location: The Kiel Farmstead is located along Illinois Route 4 approximately one-half mile south of its intersection with U.S. 64. The farmstead is situated approximately six miles north of Mascoutah and five miles east of Shiloh in Section seven of Mascoutah Township, St. Clair County, Illinois.

USGS Lebanon Quadrangle
UTM: 255,400m E / 4,269,660m N (Zone 15)

Present Owner: Public Building Commission
County of St. Clair
Belleville, Illinois

Present Occupant: None

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of Significance:

The residence at the Kiel Farmstead is a middle nineteenth-century log structure with an early frame addition. The original portion of the Kiel farmhouse was constructed ca. 1863-64 using traditional log technology and was probably built by, or for, an American-born individual. The frame addition located on the rear of the log house was constructed shortly thereafter (ca. 1868-72) using distinctive timber frame technology probably by, or for, the German immigrant Kiel family.

This small combination frame and log house was constructed for the domestic use of a rural farm family with low or modest income. The original two-room log house supplied the agrarian family with the minimal housing requirements necessary for that time period. Traditional log technology, such as that represented in the Kiel House, represents a relatively inexpensive form of construction technology available to families of low income in timber rich environments. The Kiel House is a rare, surviving example of low income, rural housing associated with middle nineteenth-century farm families and once common in southwestern Illinois.

Additionally, the Kiel farmhouse documents the transition between traditional American log technology and the distinctive timber frame technology used by the German immigrant during the middle to late

nineteenth century. The house also derives significance from its function as an early residence of a pioneer Mascoutah Township farm family.

This building retains its integrity of location, design, setting and materials. Although modest in character, this structure embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, method and period of construction and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as per Criterion C.

Part I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of Erection:

As with many vernacular buildings, the actual date of construction for the Kiel House is unknown. Based on an analysis of the chain-of-title and a physical examination of the structure, it appears that the original log house was constructed during the early to mid-1860s and that the frame addition was constructed onto the rear of the house circa 1868-72.

The physical evidence suggests that this log house was constructed during the middle nineteenth century. The logs used in the house construction are all fairly large and well fitted, suggesting that the house was constructed during a period when ample, quality timber resources were available. Such resources remained readily available at least until 1863 when the parcel of land associated with this house was entirely timber. Additionally, all dimensional lumber within this house has been cut with the use of a circular saw. No vertical sawn timber was used in the construction of this building and would suggest a post 1850-55 construction date. A door rim lock on the house that is suspected as being original to the building has both an 1863 and 1864 patent date and would suggest that this house may have been constructed (or remodeled) sometime after the later of these two dates.

The best information available regarding the date of construction of this house is derived from archival information, particularly deed records. It is unfortunate that nineteenth-century tax records are not available for this property. The chain-of-title for this property indicates that the property was sold in 1860 to Francois Toussant, a local agricultural laborer living at that time in the Franz Bassler household. Toussant sold the property a short two and a half years later and realized a 50% profit on his investment. A house is not illustrated on the 1863 county plat

for this parcel of land, even though it was identified as being owned by a "F.T." (Francois Toussant), and suggests that this house had not been constructed by that date. Therefore, it is suspected that the original log house was constructed by, or for, the Jacob Berger family, who purchased the property in April 1863.¹

As for the date of construction of the frame addition, it would appear that this was added onto the rear of the house during the late 1860s. After the death of Jacob Berger, his widow married Nicholas Kiel. In January 1868, the property was transferred by an Administrator's Deed from Franz Bassler (who had temporarily purchased the property) to Nicholas Kiel. At that time, the property sold for \$1100 --approximately 83% greater than what it sold for in April 1863. This suggests that Nicholas Kiel added the addition onto the log house during the late 1860s or early 1870s after his marriage to the widow Franziska Berger.²

2. Architect:

As with most vernacular buildings, the construction of the Kiel House was probably carried out either by an unidentified local carpenter/builder or the family members who occupied the structure. Such construction generally was conducted without the aid of formal plans and followed traditional house forms passed from generation to generation through non-written methods.³ It is doubtful that an architect was involved with the construction of the Kiel House. The log technology and house form associated with the original building suggests that it was constructed by a non-German builder. It is interesting to note that Francois Toussant was of French descent, and Jacob Berger was of German descent.

3. Original and Subsequent Owners:

The following list identifies the land owners of the twenty-acre parcel associated with the Kiel Farmstead.⁴

United States Government (to 1814)
Miles Abernathy (1814 to February 1850)
John Curtis (February 1850 to October 1860)
Francois Toussant (October 1860 to April 1863)
Jacob Berger (April 1863 - May 1865)
Franziska Berger Kiel (May 1865 - January 1868)
Nicholas Kiel, Senior (January 1868 - ca. 1905)
Nicholas Kiel, Junior (ca. 1905 - October 1940)
Herman Post (October 1940 to August 1947)
Virginia Post Roever (August 1947 to 1993)
County of St. Clair (1993 to Present)

4. Builders, Contractors, and Suppliers:

It is probable that the Kiel House was constructed by, or for, the Jacob Berger family circa 1863. The addition onto the rear of the house probably was constructed by or for Nicholas Kiel and his family (See also discussion in Part I.A.2 - Architect).

5. Original Plans:

No original plans exist for the Kiel House (See also discussion in Part I.A.2 - Architect).

6. Alterations and Additions:

The major alteration to the original Kiel House was the addition of the frame kitchen wing on the rear of the building during the middle to late nineteenth century. This addition resulted in the creation of a larger kitchen and associated work space as well as the reorientation of the original stairs leading into the loft. At this time, the house apparently was covered with narrow weatherboard siding. It is suspected that the construction of this addition required the removal of an original porch once located along the length of the building.

Other alterations occurred predominately in respect to the interior finishes and foundation materials. Interior finishes changed dramatically from exposed whitewashed logs to lath-and-plastered finishes. Similarly, the interior wall surface of the frame addition changed from exposed whitewashed studs to painted plank surfaces. Similarly, the ceilings in the original log house were sheathed in wide, beaded tongue-and-groove boards when the walls were plastered. Another change was the alteration of the window sash from multi-pane (suspected six-over-six sash) to single pane (one-over-one sash).

Foundations of the house were constantly being updated. The original house was constructed on wood piers which were later replaced by brick piers. Eventually the areas between the brick piers were infilled with brick and concrete.

B. Historical Context:

The earliest historic settlement in this portion of Illinois occurred during the final years of the seventeenth century, when French missionaries arrived at what was to become Cahokia, St. Clair County. By the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the French had established communities at Kaskaskia (1703), Fort De Chartres (1719), Prairie du Rocher (1721) and St. Philippe (1723), all located along the bottoms of the Mississippi River. During this French Colonial

period, this region became known as the Illinois Country and remained in the control of the French until the end of the French and Indian War in 1763.

Although the region was briefly under British Control, American pioneers began to pour into the region during the 1790s and early 1800s. St. Clair County was organized by the territorial Governor Arthur St. Clair in 1790, while Illinois was still part of the Northwest Territory. Although colonial French settlers had concentrated along the Mississippi River valley bottoms, the original American settlers were selecting better drained and wooded upland terrain. One of the earliest concentrations of American settlers was located in an area known as Turkey Hill --located in present day Shiloh Township east of Belleville. By 1800, approximately 20 individuals had settled in this region, and shortly thereafter the timbered lands along the Kaskaskia River and its tributaries (including Silver Creek) became well settled. These early American settlers were predominately from Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee.⁵

Following the July 1830 revolution in Europe, social and political unrest led many of the middle class, tradesmen and peasants in Germany to emigrate to North America. This immigration was spurred, in part, by the political climate that existed in Germany at the time. In the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, the governments of Germany (as well as the rest of Europe) had become reactionary, rejecting the liberalism of the revolutionary France and determined to maintain the status quo. This conservatism was exemplified by Prussia, which was the largest of the then thirty-nine German states and was a dominant military force in the region. An undercurrent of French liberalism remained, however, in the western German states that had been included within Napoleon's "Grand Empire", and many intellectuals and professionals there rejected the conservative trend in their nation. These feelings were stirred in the summer of 1830, when revolution broke out in France, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Spain and portions of Germany. The swiftness and ruthlessness with which most of these revolutions were crushed convinced many liberals in Germany that significant reforms would never be undertaken in their homeland and was the impetus for many German families to emigrate.

In 1831, many German immigrants arrived in the vicinity of Turkey Hill. The influx of the new breed of settlers in the area was so profound that an area within Shiloh Valley and Mascoutah Townships became known as the "Lateiner Settlement" in reference to "Latin Scholars," identifying the German immigrants as educated by American standards.⁶ By 1837, 160 of the 400 inhabitants of Shiloh Valley were first generation German immigrants. According to Dr. Engelmann, a German immigrant and physician who moved to St. Louis from the Lateiner settlement in 1835, "the log cabin that had sheltered the former occupant [American settlers], would not answer now [for the Germans]. Houses had to be

built, or to be improved or adorned...."⁷ Particularly after the mass migration of German immigrants during the 1850s and 1860s, the Shiloh Valley region became a distinctive rural German community. The Lateiner Settlement remained a tightly knit community until the advent of anti-German sentiment during World War I and the construction of Scott Air Force Base.

With the dawn of air transportation and World War I, Scott Air Force Base (then referred to simply as Scott Field) was established in September 1917 to train combat pilots for the American Expeditionary Force in Europe. The original airfield is one of the oldest, continuous Air Force installations in the nation and originally consisted of a one square mile leased parcel of land. In 1919, immediately following the War, the airfield was purchased by the U.S. government and used as a "Lighter-than-air" (LTA) station for air service and balloon school during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1937, the Army Air Corps phased out lighter-than-air aircraft, replacing them with fixed wing aircraft. In October and November 1938, the base expanded to an airplane and communication school. In 1948, the base was renamed Scott Air Force Base.⁸

Today, Scott Air Force Base is the home of the 375th Military Airlift Wing (MAW), which operates and maintains the base. One of the main responsibilities of the 375th MAW is the management of the continental U. S. portion of a worldwide aeromedical evacuation system, command and supervision of operational support airlift personnel and their fleet of C-12 and C-21 aircraft; command and supervision of all USAF C-29 aircraft; and initial qualification and instructor training on C-9 Nightingale, C-12F, and C-21A aircraft. In support of its mission, the 375th MAW also operates the USAF Medical Center Scott, one of six major military medical centers in the United States. In the early 1990s, the base employed nearly 12,000 individuals. Approximately 3,400 dependents of military personnel live on the base.⁹

The land on which the Kiel House is situated was first purchased from the Federal Government in 1814 by Miles Abernathy, a resident of St. Clair County.¹⁰ During the 1820s and 1830s, Abernathy amassed a large landholding in the immediate area. Abernathy sold the S1/2, NW1/4, SE1/4, Section seven to John Curtis for \$160 in February 1850.¹¹ Curtis, who retained ownership of this 20-acre wooded parcel throughout the 1850s, sold this land to Francois Toussant for \$400 in October 1860.¹² The 1863 map of St. Clair County indicates this small wooded parcel of land, which contained no houses at that time, as being owned by an unidentified "F.T.", presumably Francois Toussant.¹³ In 1860, a "Franz Toussaint" was documented as being a laborer living within the nearby Franz Basler household.¹⁴ Apparently Toussant sold the property to Jacob Berger for \$600 in April 1863. Berger and his wife Franziska mortgaged the property at that time through Frederick Wilhelm Menze of Belleville. This mortgage was satisfied in August 1878.¹⁵ It is

suspected that either Toussant improved the property through the construction of a simple log house prior to selling it to Berger and his wife, or that Berger and his family improved the property immediately upon purchase of this land. At any rate, it is suspected that the original house was constructed circa 1863.

Jacob Berger was a German immigrant (from Baden) who apparently arrived in the United States circa 1852 (based on the analysis of his childrens' birth dates and places as mentioned in the 1860 U.S. Census of Population). In 1860, the U.S. Census of Population indicated that Berger was a 36-year old male tenant ("rent") farmer living within Mascoutah Township and had a personal property value of \$900.¹⁶ On May 23, 1865 (shortly after purchasing his property), Jacob Berger died leaving four children, his wife Franziska, and debts totaling \$1100¹⁷.

By January 1868, Franziska Berger had married a fellow German immigrant named Nicholas Kiel. Born in 1823, Kiel had immigrated to the United States in 1850.¹⁸ Little is known regarding the early life of Nicholas Kiel. In January 1868, Nicholas and Franziska Kiel were forced to sell the 20 acres and improvements (including the farm house) at a public auction hld on the steps of the Court House in Belleville in order to pay Berger's debt. Franz Bassler (a neighbor and employer of Francois Toussant in 1860) paid \$1100 for the property.¹⁹ A few days later, Bassler deeded the property to Nicholas Kiel for the same amount of money.²⁰ It is suspected that it was shortly thereafter (during the very late 1860s or early 1870s) that the frame addition was constructed onto the rear of the log house.

By 1870, Nicholas Kiel was documented in the U.S. Census of Population as a 48-year old farmer with a real estate value of \$2,000 and a personal property value of \$300. Although later census returns were to indicate that he had immigrated from Germany, the 1870 census taker indicated that Kiel had immigrated from France. Franziska, his 41-year old wife, had immigrated from Bavaria in 1850. In 1870, Augustus Moyer (a 45-year old carpenter from Pennsylvania) was his neighbor and may have been responsible for constructing the addition onto his log house.²¹

Even though Kiel was documented in the 1870 U.S. Census of Population for Mascoutah Township, his farm was not enumerated in the 1870 Agricultural Census.²² The 1880 U.S. Agricultural Census indicates that Kiel was living at this location and was farming approximately sixty acres of land. Of this land, forty acres was tilled, eighteen was in pasture, and two acrss was woodlot. At that time, the farm was valued at \$4,000. Kiel apparently had \$100 worth of equipment and \$275 worth of livestock, including one milch cow, and one steer (probably for family use), and had slaughtered two steers during the previous year. Additionally, Kiel had ten hogs and thirty-one poultry on the farm. During the year he had produced minimal amounts of butter for home use

(50 pounds), planted three-quarters of an acre of potatoes and had one acre in an apple orchard. Like many of his neighbors, Kiel planted his land in wheat (32 acres) and corn (16 acres).²³ In 1885, Kiel's property had an assessed value of \$795.²⁴

Kiel mortgaged his property in August 1888 for \$1300. This mortgage (due in 5 years at 7% interest) was acquired from Gustave J. Sheve of Mascoutah and was satisfied in December 1900.²⁵ Nicholas Kiel apparently died sometime between 1900 and 1904.²⁶ At that time, the farm was taken over by his son, who was also named Nicholas. The younger Nicholas acquired a mortgage (due in one year at 6% interest) from Sheve in October 1904 for \$400. This mortgage was satisfied in July 1907.²⁷

Nicholas Kiel, Junior, retained ownership of this property until 1940, when he and Margaret Kiel sold the property to Herman J. Post for "one dollar and other valuable consideration".²⁸ Post, in turn, sold the property to his daughter Virginia Post Roever in August 1947 after reserving the right to remain on the property throughout his life. In late 1993, as part of the Scott Air Force Base expansion, the Kiel House was purchased by the County of St. Clair from Virginia Post Roever, who had been living in this house for the greater part of her life.²⁹

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character:

The Kiel farmstead represents the relatively intact remains of a middle nineteenth century farmstead (occupied by a low income, German immigrant farmer family) that was modernized during the era of agricultural prosperity that was attained in this region immediately prior to World War I. The extant buildings consist of the frame and log house, combination smoke house and summer kitchen, and privy (See photographic documentation HABS No. IL-1186-1 through IL-1186-2).

2. Condition of Fabric:

The house, summer kitchen and smoke house, and privy are in relatively good condition. The barn was destroyed by fire within the past few years.

B. Site:

1. General Setting and Orientation:

The Kiel Farmstead is situated parallel to and approximately 105' east of Illinois Route 4. A gravel lane leads from the highway to the north side of the house. The farm complex is situated in a small yard and is flanked on the north, south, and east by agricultural fields.

2. Buildings:

The site includes a one and one-half story vernacular log house with frame addition, HABS No. IL-1186-A; a one-story combination summer kitchen and smoke house, HABS No. IL-1186-B; and a shed roofed privy, HABS No. IL-1186-C. Other outbuildings once associated with the site include a barn, once located approximately 60' northeast of the house, which was constructed using timber frame technology and locally procured, circular sawn hardwoods. This structure rested on brick piers. A shed-roof addition was located along the north side of the barn and had been constructed using salvaged hand-hewn timbers from an earlier building. The barn was destroyed by fire sometime after the initial architectural survey and prior to the present documentation project (ca. 1991-92). It is suspected that the main portion of the barn functioned as a horse barn (horse stables below and hay storage above) and that the shed-roof addition functioned either as machine storage or potentially for milking a small dairy herd (4-6 cows). Additionally, a brick lined well is located approximately 20' northwest of the Kiel House.

3. Landscaping, Enclosures:

No significant features were observed.

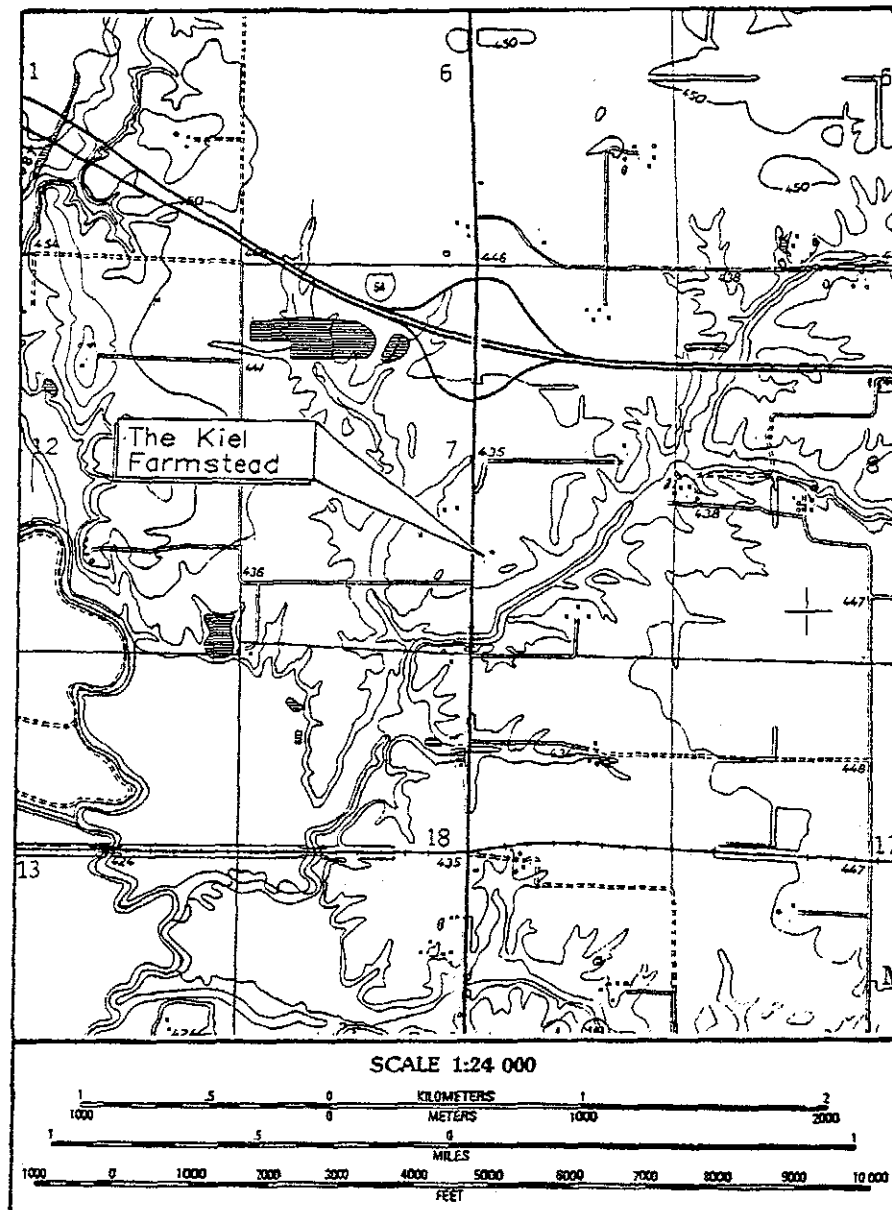


Figure 1. Location of the Kiel Farmstead (USGS: Lebanon Quadrangle, 1980).

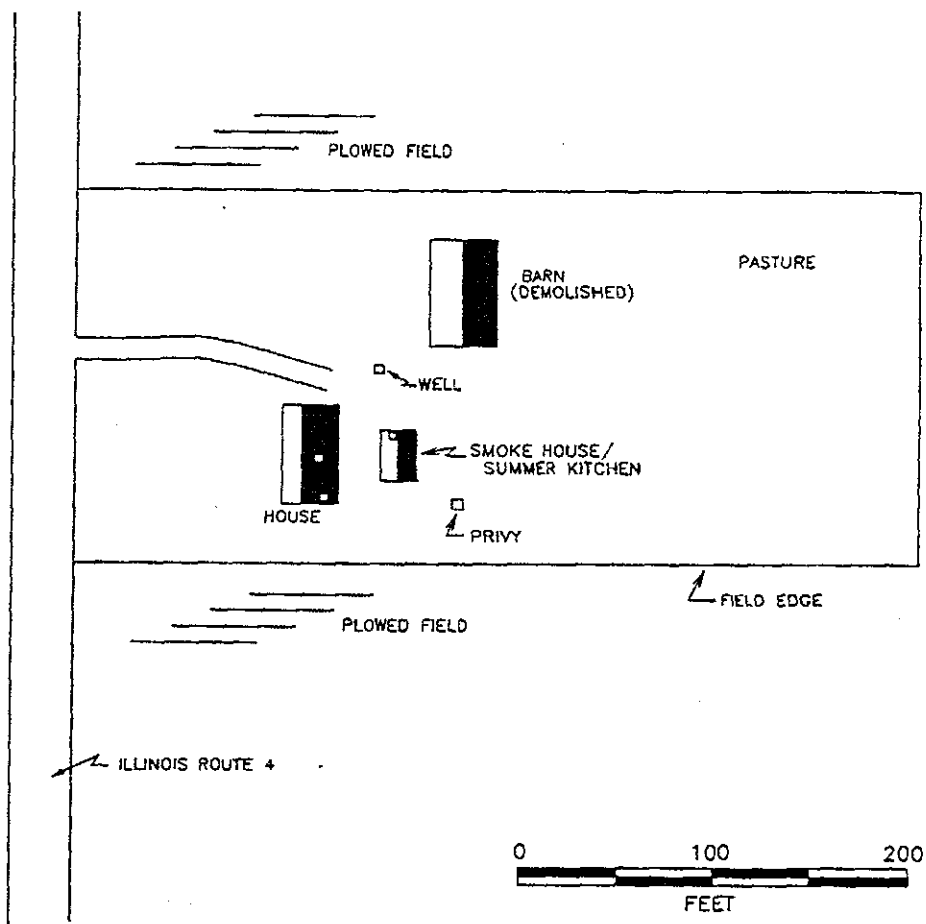


Figure 2. Sketch map of Kiel farmstead, ca. 1990.
Drawn by F. Mansberger.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

In order to increase the capacity of commercial airport operations in the United States, the Secretaries of Defense and Transportation both approved programs for evaluating joint military-civilian use of existing military facilities in 1983. At that same time, Congress directed the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to report on the feasibility of joint use at Scott AFB and two other military airfields in the United States. In March 1988, the FAA determined that joint use of Scott AFB was technically feasible.³⁰

Beginning in 1985, the Illinois Department of Transportation initiated a study of the feasibility of joint use at Scott AFB. Shortly thereafter, IDOT obtained a grant from the FAA to prepare a master plan and assess the environmental impacts of joint use at Scott AFB. These plans and assessments were prepared for the proponents of the proposed action (IDOT and St. Clair County) by Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton (TAMS) in association with other consultants.³¹

During 1988 and 1989, a Phase I archaeological reconnaissance survey of the proposed SAFB expansion was conducted by the Contract Archaeology Program at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIU-E). Results of those field investigations are presented in Holley, Gums and Brown (1990). In April 1991, SIU-E contracted with Fever River Research (Springfield, Illinois) to conduct a literature search and architectural assessment of the extant structures that were to be affected by the proposed Scott AFB expansion. The results of that work were detailed in Mansberger and Halpin (1991). In October 1992, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency determined the house at the Kiel Farmstead eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.³²

This HABS recordation was completed as a result of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Federal Aviation Administration and the Illinois State Historic Preservation Officer, which was concurred in by the Illinois Department of Transportation, and was accepted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on December 9, 1993.

IDOT received response from HABS outlining the level of documentation for this farmstead on November 19, 1992. The property was not acquired by St. Clair County until the winter of 1993. At that time Floyd Mansberger, Fever River Research (Springfield, Illinois), conducted the architectural investigations at the Kiel House. This work, although conducted for the the Illinois Department of Transportation, was conducted

under subcontract with Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville.

In March 1994, the Mascoutah Historical Society contacted the IDOT relative to accepting ownership of the Kiel House. The MOA included provisions for moving the house, and negotiations are currently under way to locate a new site for this building.

Photography was provided by Roger McCredie, IDOT, Springfield, Illinois.

Jerry Jacobson, Historic Resources Coordinator, Illinois Department of Transportation, Springfield, Illinois, provided information on the project history as well as editorial assistance in the preparation of the draft document.

PART IV. ENDNOTES

1. Refer to discussion in Part I.B. (page 6) for details regarding the land sale history of this property.
2. Refer to discussion in Part I.B. (page 6) for details regarding the land sale history of this property.
3. Henry Glassie, Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968).
4. This list is based on chain-of-title research conducted by Fever River Research at the St. Clair County Courthouse. Refer to discussion in Part I.B. (page 6 and associated footnotes) for details regarding the land sale history of this property.
5. History of St. Clair County, Illinois, (Philadelphia: Brink, McDonough, and Company, 1881), 48, 56; and Newton Bateman and Paul Shelby, Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of St. Clair County, Illinois, (Chicago: Munsell Publishing, 1907), 676.
6. Brink, McDonough and Company, 1881, 64; and Bateman and Shelby, 1907, 681-82.
7. Brink, McDonough and Company, 1881, 65.
8. TAMS (Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton), 1988, Airport Master Plan for Joint Use Operations at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, Phase II Report --Environmental Assessment-- Forecasts, Facilities, Requirements, Alternatives. Prepared for Illinois Department of Transportation and St. Clair County.

9. Betty Kennedy, An Illustrated History of Scott Air Force Base, 1917-1987, (Scott Air Force Base: Military Airlift Command, History Office, 1987); and Harland Bartholomew and Associates, 1985, Base Comprehensive Plan, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. St. Louis.
10. Public Domain Sales Tract Record Listing. Illinois State Archives. Springfield, Illinois.
11. St. Clair County Deed Record. Recorder of Deeds Office. Belleville, Illinois. Y:628.
12. Ibid; L3:344.
13. J. W. Holmes, Map of St. Clair County, Illinois (1863).
14. U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: St. Clair County, Illinois." 1860.
15. St. Clair County Deed Record, Q:492-93.
16. U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: St. Clair County, Illinois." 1860.
17. St. Clair County Deed Record, N4:203-04.
18. U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: St. Clair County, Illinois." 1900.
19. St. Clair County Deed Record, N4:203.
20. Ibid; U4:43.
21. U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: St. Clair County, Illinois." 1870.
22. U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: St. Clair County, Illinois." 1870.
23. U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schsdule: St. Clair County, Illinois." 1880.
24. St. Clair County Tax Record. Treasurer's Office. Belleville, Illinois (1885).
25. St. Clair County Deed Record, 195:255.
26. U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: St. Clair County, Illinois." 1900, 1910.

27. St. Clair County Deed Record, 267:385.
28. Ibid; 940:50
29. Ibid; 1162:287
30. TAMS (Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton), 1988a:2.2.
31. TAMS (Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton), 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1989.
32. Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Letter to IDOT dated October 20, 1992.

PART V. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings:

None available.

B. Early Views:

None available.

C. Interviews:

None conducted.

D. Bibliography:

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